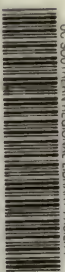


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SONGS OF THE DAWN



MISROW

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USHA SONGITA

SONGS OF THE DAWN

SRI. JOGESH CHANDER MISROW, M. A., Ph. D.

With An Introduction by
JULIAN B. ARNOLD



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Printed in Chicago, U. S. A.

TO
G. M. V. DEVI

PR
6025
M667u

AND

TO
MY LOVING INSPIRATION

1732171

FOREWORD

All this is reminiscent!

Since that twilight many things have come to pass. Yes, they have changed even the face of the fair earth. But at last the anguish of night's deep darkness merges into the dawn's vibrant resplendence in the East.

How different was that adoration in the moonlight, from this calm worship in the dawn!

To a Brahmin the supreme joy of victory lieth in the sacredness of Renunciation. Unforgotten—only Enshrined—so be it to the end!

And these Songs of the Dawn are no more than faint refrains of my unchanted hymns to Thee.

INTRODUCTION

It has ever been the wont of those, nurtured under Oriental skies, to express their loftiest thoughts in verse, leaving to the professional story-teller the task of reciting in prose national exploits and mundane happenings. This instinct of Asia to voice the lisplings of her soul in accord with the rhythms of the universe has enriched mankind with the splendour of the Vedic hymns; with the profound wisdom of the Mahabharata; with the astronomical knowledge enshrined in the Chaldean epic of Gilgamash; with the enduring tone of the Iran Avendi; with the moving drama of Job; with prayers and prophecies of Isaiah; and with the rhapsodies of the Psalms.

To the Occident belongs a sterner instinct, a grimmer gift. As the light of the sun obeys the dividing magic of the prism, so the light of knowledge may be separated into its component parts, whereof the clearer tints enwrap devotional philosophies while the deeper colours bathe the pageantries of this material world. The Occident is richer for the stirring pages of the Illiad; the entrancing adventures of Odysseus; the clash of arms and the sea breezes of the Sagas; the chivalrous teachings of a Roland or a Cid. But in the realms of religion we, of the Western world, stand mouthing misty prose amongst the awed crowds attendant on the dark ceremonials of the Druids, the bloody sacrifices to Odin, or the gloomy meetings in the cave or dell of the early Christians.

As it hath been it will be. In the convoluted conch-shell the Oriental hears the mystic music of that eternal Ocean which is the love divine. In the dust of labour and the bush aflame the Occidental sees the trodden path to God.

Therefore have we no surprise in finding so eminent a savant of India as Sri Jogesh Chander Misrow, one who is the holder of the Master of Arts degree of Stanford and a Doctor of Philosophy, expressing in untrammelled and ingenuous verse the true self of their author in these SONGS OF THE DAWN. To me it has been a great privilege to read these poems in their manuscript form, and I have discerned, as I venture to think all who must who read with inward vision, that the obscurity of our mental skies is bravely pierced by the author with a light of faith in the purposes of life and the themes of his poems are suffused with the tints of a Divine Dawn.

It were invidious to select; but poems are like eyes, some appeal to us and claim our special attention, admiration. In the "Star-Babies" occurs a motive so charming that in Elizabethan days it had been called a pretty conceit; in the "Incarnations" the contrast between the golden sands of Egypt, the snows of the Arctic circle and the verdant gardens of India are artistically striking; in the "Moon Stone", we have a song so ardent yet soft that it might fitly borrow the music of one of oft sung Indian Love Lyrics, and "Thy Temple" resounds with fervent ecstasy.

It was a favorite saying of the late Sir Edwin Arnold that those who think in poesy have clearer eyes than those who think in prose, and in wishing bon voyage to these exquisite verses—"The Songs of the Dawn"—I would venture to echo that phrase of the author of the Light of Asia, who loved so well the earnestness and depth of the ancient philosophies of India.

Chicago, U. S. A.

Julian B. Arnold.

October, 1919.

CONTENTS

Song of the Dawn	17
In the Moon and the Dawn	18
Summer Dawn	19
Star Babies' Moon Mother.....	20
Moonstone.....	21
To Bengal.....	22
Sea or Python	23
My City	24
Shuttle of Fate	25
Sun -- Crucifix	26
Incarnations.....	27
Why Tonight	28
Response.....	29
Where Tonight.....	30
Temptation	31
Forlorn	32
New Cross	33
Coronal.....	34
Star--Thieves.....	35
Ode to India	36
Anticipation.....	37
Pain.....	38
Mystic Sunset	39
Cathedral	40
Sri Gautama	41

Tonight.....	42
Bell, Candle and Book.....	43
Vesper Song	44
Thy Temple.....	45
Mother	46
Peret Hirshbein	47
Ode to the Indian Ocean.....	48
The Natal Day	50
The Taj Mahal	51
In Nirvana.....	52
My Unsung Song	53

DAWN

Who shall sing the Song of the Dawn?
Not he who kept the glory of the eve
Away from his temple,
Barring fast the gates;

Nor he who dreamt night-long
Of numbers and scales in busy mart
Even though the day was done!
The crescent canoe on the sky-ocean
Sailing to the dreamland
Beckoned in vain to him.
His parched lips sipped
The fiery draught,
Seeking in roar of passion
That which silence alone can give,
In worship of soul by soul—
Vain to him the calm of night.

But he who mutely, gently, night-long
Vigiled the flickering wick of hope
As the storm raged and groaned
Without—within—
Will he now rekindle the sacred flame
With the warmth of his bleeding heart,
Now that the storm is gone,
And darkness is no more—
His is the hour—the day—
Sings he the Song of the Dawn!

IN THE MOON AND THE DAWN

Last eve in the moon
Under the bower of the star-vines
I vowed the eternal vow,
I adored Thee as Love.
The evening breeze whispered
The passion-mad plea
Far and wide—
Last eve in the moon.

Today in this Thy dawn,
Under the flaming canopy of heaven,
In the first rays of the rising sun
Thou art transfigured;
I worship Thee now, Goddess!

The morning wind echoes
My sacred chants
Far and wide
Today—in this Thy dawn!

SUMMER DAWN

What musings, what far-off dream—
Day-dreams—
Come this dawn of June
As I softly lay my head
Upon the cushion of the grassy knoll
Over the bold hill of Krotona—
Robed in delicate green garb of summer!
I am one with Nature
In Life's inmost sanctuary.
I gaze upon the endless blue billows below
And the boundless rosy sky above,
And mine eyes drink deep
From the fount of thy beauty,
Amid these wild flowers that blushingly listen
To the birds' amorous wooing
And bees' jealous petulant groans.
What phantoms come and go!

This dawn, ere the light-flood comes
To sweep night's languor away,
Whilst still throb the warmth of thy touches,
The cadence of thy moans,
Ere all is lost and forgotten,
Oh, let me die the deathless death
In thine own arms!
O beauteous bride, sweet Dawn—
O Infinity of Form!

✓ STAR-BABIES' MOON-MOTHER

Hushed is the voice of Night.
The Moon-mother has led out
The Star-babies a-playing
On the blue meadow of the sky.

How frolicsome and gay!
They romp, skip and run away,
Hide-and-seek they play
Behind the tapestries of clouds,
And climb the arches of rainbow,
Then drop upon the earth dew-drops—
Their joy-tears shed in play.

Hushed is the voice of Night.
Where the Earth-children sleep
While the Moon-mother plays
With wide-awake Star-babies
On the blue meadow of the sky,
Far, far away.

MOONSTONE

Deep is the sea—
From shore to shore, the sight mergeth
Unto the billowy blue Infinity.
In its depth lies the gem.
In its heart of heart,
Amidst what tumult
Unseen, invisible it shines
In the splendor of seven moons!
Come! dive deep without faint or fear!
For the lost talisman of immortality
Is worthy of none but thee.
Thou blessed Princess of the Moon
Fear not, though deep is the sea;
Thy moonstone waits for thee.

TO BENGAL

A mountain of dark gray clouds
Rises against the roseatte sunset,
My last sunset on thy sacred shores
O Sweet Bengal—queen of the Indian sea!
The sacred blood of our Sires—
The tears of our mothers and maidens,
Purest of earth's sweetest blossoms—
Envy of the Lotus, Juthie and the Bengal Rose
Came crowding on thy horizon
Fading fast away . . .
Not a sob of wind,
Nor a moan of the Bengal Bay!
From the Mangoe and Cocoonut groves
The Madana, Moyna, Teeah,
Chirp not their salutations sweet,
To me and the parting Day.
Grief-laden and sullen is the earth,
Sullener still the heart.
All is mute at this parting . . .
Then, as the mountain of dark gray clouds
Rises higher and higher hiding Thee from me,
Widens the chasm between us,
Could I but say to Thee, Adieu, Adieu—
My golden Bengal—queen of the Indian Sea!
But silence seals my quivering lips
With cold, cold kisses.
All seems mute at this parting,

Yet what a symphony of the soul
Plays this fallacious silence
On this parting day!
On the Bengal Bay.

SEA OR PYTHON? ✓

What a huge blue blazing python
This sea!
Its thousand wave-hoods arched in rage
Hiss fumes of death-gray foams.
It writhes, wriggles, dashes and rolls
In mammoth longitude—
From sky to sky.
How in drunken fury,
It groans and roars, swings and sways
Its breaker fangs,
Darts to smash the sandy beach—the earth.

Oh, whose restless spirit
Is this blue blazing Python,
Whose impetuosity—
This sea?

✓ MY CITY

Thou art no city,
Nor mortal haunt or mart,
But a living panorama of spirit,
Indomitable and bold,
Incarnate in these thy myriad
Marble towers, spires and domes—
Heavenward march of Man's inmost urge—
Sincere, invincible!

None but a dull dead soul
May look upon this thy seething whirlpool
Of haunted humanity
And remain insensate—unmoved!

* * *

The breath of dreadful hurricane—thy haste!
In thy broad bosom meet and mingle
The West and East, South and North,
Heaven and Hell—pole to pole!
And thou blindest Past and Future,
Old and New, in one great flood of light.
Thy ever-living Present rushes on,
Conquering all, inspiring all—
Lo! the city of faith's eternal flame!

SHUTTLE OF FATE

Weave ye shuttle of Fate,
Weave on the fabric of life
A new and abiding pattern,
For the hour has come
To alter the "scroll of Norn."

Through the silent depth of night,
And loudly sonorous day-long,
Weave on silently—the hour cometh!
Unaware we waited long, too long.
You in a lonely castle in Sunset Land
And I in the wilderness of cities,
Awaiting these Ides of March.
We knew not it was so nigh.
We hastened not,
Nor shall we tarry now,
On the path of the pilgrimage far.

* * *

Inscrutable the design
Thou hast woven with skill,
O, shuttle of Fate,
With time and space,
Two hearts with thirst of ages,
A few flowers of worship,
Of love and hope, a few kisses,
A whisper, tears of joy and pain,
And a soul's homage to a soul—
Awaiting silently in the lonely castle,
So near, yet, so far, far away.

THE SUN OR THE CRUCIFIX?

The sun, a huge crucifix,
Wallows in an ocean of blood.
Wave after wave rises and dances
Upon the far horizon
In the flaming East.

Whence this mad rhythm of Nirvana?
And what is that upon the crimson crucifix?
In the fast fading myriad shapes and colours
Transforming this mysterious Cross of majesty,
I read a symbol vast and true—
A Soul crucified, and more!

* * *

The scarlet hues of the eastern sky
Like frozen red dream-waves heave,
Alas! from whose torn heart?
Whose tears unshed?
Whose cry unheard?

INCARNATIONS

Only yesternight,
In the shadow of the Pyramids,
My own Goddess, Thou and I
Watching in silence,
Saw the folly of Pharaoh
And pride of Cleo of the Nile.
Thy rose-lips quivering
In soft sweet whispering—
And mine?
Ah, yesternight on the shore of the Nile,
How brief the short-lived joy!

Yesternight—
It seems but yesternight—
In a valley of midnight sun
Between snow-crowned crags of the North
Again we watched
The fury of the fjords.
In strange hush of misty light—
The same maddening fury—
But ah, how brief was the short-lived joy.

Yea, again,
And yesternight by the moon
In the Peacock garden on the Ganges shore
Amid perpetual spring of youth
At the threshold of Kama's Ivory Temple
How . . . how we met.
Yesternight!
For it seems but yesternight.
And tonight . . .

WHY TONIGHT

Why from the fount of immortality
Hast thou filled tonight
'This golden goblet of thine,' Beloved?
Churning of what ocean deep
Has yielded this new ambrosia of hope?
To waken what slumbering soul,
Draught by draught,
Dances this sparkling primal rhythm
In sun and moon and stars and man,
Thrilling with blind uncertain joy. . . .

But why bringest thou so close
This golden goblet of thyself, so frail,
The first vintage of thy youth,
Nectar of the immaculate lotus-bud
From thy pool of love infinite—
To these parched lips of aeons tonight?

* * *

Open are the Ivory Gates,
A joy-mad earth and hell and paradise,
Death and decay are conquered all!
Tonight the soul of soul awakes.
A thousand suns shall shine, night-long;
There shall be no space, no time!
The divine crown is again
Upon the brow of Nature's Queen—
Thou, my Beloved, my Eternity!

RESPONSE ✓

Faint, frail, uncertain of itself,
Leaned back in silence
In repose of sweet agony
In the temple of Night.
The stars and moon above
Swooned in enchanted sympathy.

No, no, away! peep not
Into this lonesome heart's castle.
Come not so close!
Away from this forbidden garden!
Has it been guarded in vain,
Awaiting this thy triumphant entry?

Ah, this fateful night,
I know not myself.
Oh, for the awakening of what dead soul
Bringest thou me thy response?
This all-conquering animation,
This world-desire, like an avalanche,
Swift, blind, and impetuous
Sweeps all—bold and majestic.
Tell me, Moon and sweet Star-Maidens
Through the voice of the South wind,
Why in my blood this delirium?
Do you feel with me the same thrills—
Tonight, in the far-off sky?
Ah, 'tis then the conspiracy of Fate.
Come! be all, and take all
Of this garden of life.



WHERE TONIGHT

Where tonight?
Wandering in what far-off clime,
Under what strange stars,
Watching what deep sea's surging billows—
Like the restless soul,
Forsaken
But unforgotten!

Oh! Where tonight?
Can it there hear the call
Of the shoreless, endless expectancy—
Can it there see and feel—
Impatient wooing of the rebellious April breeze
To spring's adolescent jessamine buds
So illuding, amorous and shy—
In the pale desolate moon tonight. . . .

TEMPTATION

If step by step, hand in hand,
Thou hast led me on
To the Ivory Temple of Dream,
Now bid me in, Beloved.
Vain this bashful hesitancy now.
The rebellious joy,
Wakened in the bosom,
Is impatient as captive doves;
The whole form is a-thrilled
In throbs of expectancy.
Surging ocean waves
Rock and swing in primal rhythm
Round the temple of living Spirit
In ecstasy of worship—
Vain this faltering now.

On thy rose-petaled eager lips
Comes the sweet silent call,
Thine eyes drooping and shy, beckon
The message of the North Star;
Bid me in, Beloved,
Into thy temple of worship,
Lest the moon mock me from above.
And the night wind spread idle tales
Far and wide.

FORLORN

How impalpable this emptiness—
In the stillness of starlight
Through the spangles of mist
I see not far, very far—
I look and look and look in vain
Where it was. The night-long
Primal warmth of ecstasy
Graces my bosom no more.

The dew-draped dawn
Smiled at the morning glory;
And a stray nightingale
Sang its far lone refrain.
The vision smiled and murmured
And nestled closer, and throbbed.
As the night fled, dishevelled and deflowered,
The snow-shrouds covered evergreen Earth
With the widowed mantle of peace!
Oh, Ave Maria of the morning breeze!

NEW CROSS

What new cross wilt thou bid me bear?
In what sackcloth and ashes repent?
Of what wild honey and locust-flower
Wouldst Thou, the New Prophet, partake?
Through the valley of the shadow of death
To what Golgotha and Gethsemene
Will there be the new Dawn
And the New Faith proclaimed?
What old temple will burst asunder
From spire to the base—
Cataclysm and earthquake—
The mortal globe wrecked to dust
By reign of terror and tears.

* * *

The cross is growing heavier,
The crown of thorns pains the brow;
The lance has pierced the heart;
Life is ebbing out in precious flow.
But, Oh, the will—the will—is not done!
Still unquaffed the cup's bitter dregs.

* * *

Then adieu, farwell, fair earth!
This new cross, ladder of my paradise
For the unspoken whisper
I have waited aeons to impart
Now I avow—
Yea, though it costs me the cross. . . .

CORONAL

Why weep these tears
In this thine hour of triumph,
My Fairy Princess,
Known to me from birth to birth?
Thou hast oft eluded me,
Now thy hour cometh once more.
Why then weepest thou these tears?
May they not again extinguish
The flame of abiding faith and love
On the altar of thy heart's core,
My Fairy Princess,
My own Love-Queen?

For this worship of an hour
Have I not waited aeons?
From the star to the star,
Moon to the moon, near and far
The long, long quest
From birth to birth. . . .
With my love-light and lyrics
I have brought my heart's throne
To enthrone thee forever—ever,
Queen of Love's Universe. . . .

STAR-THIEVES ✓

The moonbeams are made
Of thy laughter,
Thy breath makes fragrant
The spring's South Sea breeze.
Cunning star-thieves steal
The merry twinkle from thine eyes.
But tonight I forgive them;
They remind me of thee.
I am alone.

Raven locks and tresses
Borrowed from thy graces—
They waken in me thy caresses,
Tonight, when I am lonely.

ODE TO INDIA

Inde, my Inde, how sweet thy memory!
Dearest land of sacred lores,
Shrine-abode of world-faiths—
Man's hope of hopes!

From thy enchanted woodlands
Come the echoes of bird-minstrels,
The Syamas' whistles,
The Papias' songs,
Koel's cooing long.
The shy bride-eyed fawn's play,
In the mossy dales and bowers;
Dance of the proud peacock gay;
The Apsara-fairies gambol
About sky-kissing Deodars
Entwined with frail Malati vines.

The maidens of bronze and golden hue
With bee-black eyes, coral lips,
Languorously weave wreathes of Bakula,
In shades of the Taj by the Lotus-lake;
And gaze at the dome of frozen tears—
Token of Love's triumph o'er Death.
What a Paradise on earth unfolds
To these exiled eyes.
Soul's worship to Thee,
And the heart's holiest homage,
Stronger than sword's sharpest pledge
Are thine and thine own,
Above all the world
For all the time,
All the time, O Inde!

ANTICIPATION

This last day of the cycle of the years,
As we sit by the fire,
What visions come and fade!
What signs unfold!
Gently the earth beneath kisses your lotus feet.
The world looks fair and fresh and free;
Sky so beautiful, so enchantingly blue;
How glorious is the sun!
You have given it your heart's warmth
To waft to me on ethereal wings.
The languor of the virgin Eve—beaming
With her youth's intoxicating moonbeams,
Is but the image of thine own expectant smile,
In anticipation—
Of the dawn of the new Aeon!

PAIN

Ah, Fate give me back my pain,
From the soul of the young and the aged,
From the heart of the new and the old
Pour me all the world's pain.
Vast is my bosom—the void . . .
Deep as the soundless seas
In thy boundless abode
Long have I loved to adore.
O Fate, give me back my pain
Ever truest unto me
Unfailing in her trysts
Clinging closer, closer to my heart.

* * *

Then come, from those sunset shores
Within this enehanted bower
That in Life's scented sanctuary
I may woo thee again, O Pain!
With caresses of love's festive hour . . .
Pain, O world pain, O love . . .
As the rose-bud shiveringly blushes
At the bees' first tender touches,
There blends the rhythm of hues
With melodies of hum and moans.

So are thine eehoes inexplicable
On my desolate harp of soul.
Born with the Earth's first-born—
Whose joy art thou, O Pain!
My all in all, my very own . . .

MYSTIC SUNSET

What mysterious signs on the horizon—
Can this be only a sunset?
No, no! who has ever seen such a sky
As we two see from the niche of thy bower,
Over forests green towers,
And snow-clad dales.
Far, far out,
The sky is an ocean of soft light,
As far as we two can see
And beyond. . . .

O Thou sacred Land of the Aryans—
Inde, our asylum of hope,
Far, far out, across the sea of light,
We greet Thee with heart and soul—
Our dreams and hopes.

O the golden-crowned monarch,
O the purple-robed king of the sky
And lord of the virgin dawn,
Two of thy children,
Love-lorn and weary
Look at Thee
With wistful eyes and eager hearts,
Seeking a nook to nest young love,
A refuge from a stolid world,
From a decaying, death-dealing horde.

May these mysterious signs then
Forbode the fulfilment of our dream
Call us to the holy Ganges shores,
In joy and glory of freedom!

✓ CATHEDRAL

What a towering green-blue dome
Of foliage overhead
Kisses the azure sky.
Corridor of arches dense and deep
The mammoth boughs outspread,
Rest on the columns of ivory gray
Living monoliths tall and straight!

Entwining all, climb and cling
The vines of Kanaka Lata—
Golden ivies with blushing coral blossoms
Peep through the veil of purple mist.
Incense of the flowering spring
Wafts with the heavy moan
Of the wooing and the mating doves,
Languorous in the slumbering shade above.

Steeped in majestic calm of ages
Awaits, alas, whose pilgrimage,
Whose loving worship
This Cathedral of the Bodhee tree!

SRI GAUTAMA

Enshrined in the temple of space
Enthroned on Eternity
Thine gemmed-lotus—the Mahasan
Heart of Humanity.
The star-candles,
The silvery Mirror of the Moon,
The gong of pealing thunders
The sonorous tolls of thousand vesper bells
In the distant roar of the Deep.

These are but meagre adoration
Of Thee—
O blessed Gautama!
Thy golden chariot
On million Sun-disks,
Wheels 'round the Infinity,
With what a **resplendence!**
Thy loving wisdom, joy of growth—
Unfolds soul of Freedom and Peace—
Thy song of Nirvana,
Brings whispers of undying Hope!

TONIGHT

The dreadful Angel
With dark wings overspread
Enmeshes the earth from pole to pole.
The rain, her sobs,
The snow, her frozen tears,
The wild winds of the West, her sighs.
Tonight all is dread, terror and tears.
Lo, those death-dark wings come nearer now,
Strangle life, pull heart-strings
And wildly laugh and mock,
They crush and crush
Atom by atom, petal by petal,
Youth's sweetest dream-rose,
Hope's choicest bud!
How cruel night's dark wings!

BELL, CANDLE, AND BOOK ✓

Bell, Candle and Book,
A little incense and myrrh—
No purple crepe
Nor any black-gowned pale-faced mourner,
No orgies of tears and sobs and sighs,
Mocking and insensate,
When I pass unto Nirvana!

The bells of the west wind
Blowing in gale,
The candles of the midnight stars
On the salver of the sky,
And this Thy Book of Fate
With life's hidden lores unsipped, unexplored,
A single violet or lotus,
Sweet flower of fancy
In the garden of Thine and mine,
Are all that I ask.

Sing no songs of sorrow,
No psaltry of sobs;
Toll no other bells,
Light no other candles,
Read no other book
When I flicker out—
Unto Nirvana!

No heavy stones on my frail form,
My cold, cold ashes.
Memorial?
Only a pearl wreath
Woven of thy tear-drops
My last memories
Mothered in Earth's bosom
With thy Bell, Candle and Book!

THE VESPER SONG

My Love, O come, and watch with me
The farewell beams kissing the sea;
With bridal veils of evening trails,
Sweetly entwines each vine and tree.
In primal chants the gentle lea,
As love-lorn lights longingly flee,
Whispers soft in its vesper glee—
Come, Soul-mate, come! Heart longs for thee.
Ah, arm in arm, our hearts beat one:
Love's coronal though far is won—
Thus we triumph, though world forsak'n,
This eve regain our long lost heav'n!

THY TEMPLE

Oh, where shall I build Thee a temple,
The sky so low, dwarfs its spires,
The Void small, ah, too small,
The universe none too wide for a base,
For thy fitting Temple
O Loving Goddess mine . . .
How shall I worship Thee—
All the flowers of all the lands,
Of every season and hue and scent,
And the flaming lotus of my soul
Have I sanctified in offering to Thee,
Loving Goddess mine.
And where are my chant and rosary?
Amid the deep symphony of the Seas
The wild gale danceth with wilder waves
Thy vestal virginal dance of my senses . . .
My rosary of the Stars—
Thunder Heralds on chariot of clouds
Mingle their trumpet blares,
With the sweet choristers of the song birds—
Vesper and Matin of their strains . . .
The Planets dance in Space
A timeless, endless, ceaseless dance
In my own ecstasy.
Shall Thy Temple be—
In my Soul's inmost sanctuary?

✓
MOTHER

Thine own garland this
I lay at thy lotus feet,
Mother mine
Woven of strange blossoms though,
Plucked from strange gardens
Across the seven seas,
On this pilgrimage from shore to shore
Away, far away from Thee . . .

Thine own hymn this,
I now scribe and chant,
Mother mine,
Though in tongues strange,
Of distant lands and lores,
Across the seven seas
On this pilgrimage from shore to shore
Seeking a Hymnal for Thee . . .

Thine own worship—
All my noble thought and deed
Mother Mine!
In thy boundless love,
I have made the world one with me!
May I live and labour and die for Thee;
Sing the song of Thy freedom—
Wherever may I be,
Thine annointed and ordained!
Unconquered, unconquerable—
O, Mother Mine!

TO PERET HIRSHBEIN

Thou celestial song-bard!
Poet-priest of Youth's abiding hope,
The enduring faith of Ages.
How the world old dreams,
Once sleeping in the stars
And in the eyes of youth,
Now kiss the light, on the wings
Of thy colors and shades and words.
Glory, joy, mirth, love,
Weave pearl wreaths of morning dew.
Fancy with her amorous arms
And vibrant ruby lips sips
Nectar from life's first feast
Of Passion sublime!

✓ ODE TO THE INDIAN OCEAN

Ocean, Indian Ocean, my own ocean!
Last eve did I hear in thee,
The uproar—tumult of a soul;
A voice that shivered to the suns,
And the moons and the stars,
And to all the worlds unseen!

Came there life's first ecstasy—
The rebellious adolescence,
Amid the rapturous song of thy tides.
In the dance of thy impatient waves,
Came to the eyes a vision sublime,
Playing with the heart's impetuous flames.
In what a holocaust of raging passion,
The whole universe was aflame—
Last eve as I gazed upon thee!

But this dawn—
As thou reclinest on the divan
Of the ivory shores of Jagannath,
So langourous, pale and wan,
What a gentle melody comes in thy moans!
What loving caresses—
In thy million arms. Now calm—
All is calm, without—within!

The incense-kissed breeze of the dawn
Plays with thy golden locks;
Scatters them to the four-winds,
Then weaves them into garlands,
Of new planets and globes!

The call of the Puri Matin-bells
Mingles with the melody of thy echoes,
Summon all to the Temple of Silence—
A hush . . .
Thou ecstasy of triumphant hopes
Ocean, Indian ocean, My ocean!
My very own . . .



NATAL DAY

To-day is the day of days
Thy natal day, my love
And loves crowning day!
What shall I offer thee,
Princess mine, my love-goddess
With what shall I worship thee—
On this day of day—thy natal day?

The ruby-red roses,
Of my ocean deep passion—
Have I not offered thee
Long, long ago? And did not you
Crush them to thy bosom—
In ecstasy of response?
My silver-white rosary,
I brought to thee,
My calm dreams;
Thine also the incense
Of my soul's resplendent gleam;
Thine the golden lotus
With the thousand petals—
My lyrics of the Dawn—
For thee—all for thee.
On this day of day, and evermore!
Ah, what else have I, but thyself?

THE TAJ MAHAL

The Taj now like a huge white swan
Floats on the ocean of moon beams,
As the world round vanishes
Into the opalesque ethereal mists
Of this autumn full moon night.

There is naught but the pale pangs
Silhouetted in an earthly form
In this silent shrine of sorrow
This Palace of Pain.
This lyric in stone chaste and enduring
O what a refrain brings from the Past—

They that build shrines to the vain gods,
Or fearsome ghosts, cruel phantoms,
Or the unseen hosts of the skies,
May scoff at thee, pass thee by, unheeding;
But O marble mausoleum, every atom of thee,
Is but frozen anguish and ecstasy of love.
Art thou not a living throbbing loving Token.
Of all that Man feels and forfeits,
At the Altar of the One lost yet adored
In this pilgrimage of Life to Death!
Symbol of a soul's enduring bliss, art thou,
O TAJ—O noble Temple of Tears!

IN NIRVANA

No, Thou art gone; but not dead!
Thou can'st not die, O spirit invincible!
Invisible though now, Beloved,
Thou art nearest to me than ever before,
Dwelling in my own temple of thought!

The Champa, Shefali and Jui yet bloom,
At rise and set of the Sun and the Moon;
The birds sing and the bees hum;
Murmuring flows the Ganges streams.
Do they not bring the far off echoes of thy voice?
When all is here; all who adored thee,—
What if atom to atom did fly?
The dust unto the dusty earth—
To the tempest impetuous, thy breath;
To the clouds the water and tears;
Elements play of hide and seek—
On the lap of adoring Nature, all this!

But thy spirit?
So gentle and sweet and loving—
Closest of all my kind on this globe.
By the tie of flesh and blood,
Faith and hope and more!
Lo, this incense upward climbing,
Vault by vault, star by star,
To the seven heavens and the beyond,
Like pilgrimage of thy soul of soul!

Shall I weep and sob and sigh
For thee, O child of Immortality?
When through the Gates of Death
Into the Shrine of Infinity of Bliss
Attainest thou thy quest—thy Mukti,
O child of Brahman, so sweet and free!
For thee now is the Repose,
In the glory of the Nirvana!

UNSONG SONG

The unsung song wails,
Wails for the lost chord
From the gray depths of ocean
To the tower of the stars—
All is wailing,
Wailing.

Day-long, night-long,
Vault to vault,
Echoing in eternal throbs,
Danceth in color and sound,
In aeons of autumn, summer and spring
My own unsung song.

The whisperings of my soul—
I hear in chirping birds!
The wail of the west wind,
Thunder of the cloud-sprite,
Incessant calling of the sea,
And the dreamy hum of the honey-bees
Bring but a faint refrain
Through the infinite rhythm
Of my own unsung song!

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